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16 May 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: LT. COL. [REDACTED] 25X1A  
PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

SUBJECT : Ideological Warfare

1. The following remarks are addressed toward a further focusing on the problem of how to proceed with the development of an ideological offensive.

2. First, a few comments on the Kennedy paper. I found it very stimulating and comprehensive. In fact, I found it to cover a large area of the cold war — only a portion of it seems to be directed to the specific subject of ideological warfare. The heart of the matter is, to quote Kennedy, that "we cannot expect to subvert the enemy if we cannot even speak his language." This point is substantiated later on where it is indicated that in order to promote splits within the Party, "we must employ Marxian terms of reference." It is interesting to observe in connection with our particular problem that most of the specific comments in this excellent paper do not adhere to this basic premise. I think it would be helpful in defining the problem to comment on this point. A psychoanalysis description of Stalin, explaining his actions on the base of his subconscious hate of the father image, might have very effective results in the United States, perhaps elsewhere in Western Europe, but probably have very little impact within the USSR where the very subject of psychology, especially Freudian psychology, is verboten. Similarly, the analogy between the USSR and a prison is a very apt one and can be put to good use in the psychological offensive, but does not represent a form of ideological attack.

3. I labor these points only to show how difficult it is for even politically sophisticated Americans to think in terms of Communist ideology with any facility.

4. For the purpose of this problem I suggest we adopt a rather narrow definition of terms. If for these purposes ideology is defined as "the basic beliefs motivating a social

system," our

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system," our ideological warfare should have this basic content:

a. Attacks against Communist ideology developed in Marxist terms. This attack would have two main divisions: (1) attacks against the basic premises of the system, i.e. materialism, dialectics, etc.; and (2) attacks against the Stalinist deterioration of Marx, again in Marxist terms, but on the assumption that the basic premises are correct. This type of attack is a universal one in that it would reach members of international Communist movements everywhere.

b. Attacks against the existing Communist system, both its fundamental premises and acts of ideological practices in colloquial terms for every area in which the Communist movement has any importance. The aim of this attack would be to immunize potential converts who have not received any Marxist indoctrination from Communist propaganda. (The exposure literature against Communism which has appeared in this country since 1945 represents an effective example of this type of ideological counter-attack. It has been remarkably successful.)

c. Defense of Western society in Marxist terms. This defense would be addressed to intellectuals everywhere who have been so indoctrinated in Marxist terms that their whole political and sociological language is to a large degree Marxist. To illustrate this type of ideological task, we might consider a booklet recently published by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce entitled "Profits." This booklet attempts to set out in lay language that anyone can understand the "hows" and "whys" of the profit system. A Marxist defense of the American system, on the other hand, would show how the surplus values of our productive system have been progressively distributed in ever greater amounts to the workers rather than concentrated in the hands of a few grasping capitalists. This would be a much more effective eye-opener abroad than anything published by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

d. A defense of Western society, written in the vernacular to act as an antidote in overseas areas where the Communists are attacking the basic system.

e. As an example of type content of the ideological attack written in Marxist terms, see Tab A.

5. Production of ideological

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5. Production of ideological ammunition. One of the first tasks to be accomplished is to survey the existing field of books that have already been written that could fit into one of these four categories. Souvarine's "Stalin" comes to mind as one such book, but there are many others. We should find out what circulation such works have received, and as part of the problem of distributing, see that these books are revised, popularized and given intensive distribution.

6. The next thing we must do is to shape up in some detail the type of additional books that should be written in the United States, but primarily abroad to cover as many aspects as possible of the problem. The next task is to survey the field of potential authors of appropriate books, pamphlets, articles, etc. It is the consensus of most people that this enterprise will be worthwhile only if the books (articles, etc.) themselves have high sponsorship and are superbly done. We have it within our means to stimulate the production of such books by competent foreign authors.

7. Distribution. It is the general consensus that insofar as possible, normal existing outlets should be used for this purpose. There is much greater authenticity and credence in a book having the stamp of an internationally known publishing house than in those published by new or relatively unknown concerns. It is believed that most of these books, if well written, can find a publisher on their own. It may be, however, that the actual writing of them may have to be subsidized in certain cases. It is generally believed that the distribution of any large quantities of these books -- and our aim should be to get them into every library and every discussion center of every critical area -- may have to be supported. The USIS has, of course, done very useful work in this field, but its selection of titles may not have been made with this purpose in mind.

8. The subject of distribution should, of course, involve more than books. Consideration might be given to the publication of a journal sponsored by one of the more prominent anti-Communist international organizations. Such a journal would, of course, not be controlled by any government. But its editorial and news contents could emphasize ideological factors and be slanted to defend the Western cause. There is also the problem of stimulating the writing of substantial articles on various facets of the ideological struggle in existing publications.

9. The distribution problems are not insoluble, but they will require a carefully worked out plan.

10. Procedure

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10. Procedure. What the Psychological Strategy Board can do with regard to this effort is (1) to give its official seal of approval to the necessity for waging an ideological offensive, (2) help delineate the substance and boundaries of such an offensive, and (3) charge the appropriate agencies with certain missions with regard to this offensive. In connection with the question of developing various aspects of this problem, I am attaching at Tab B a memorandum prepared for you by Mr. [REDACTED] with 25X1A reference to the problem of procedure.

25X1A  
[REDACTED]

Attached:

Tab A

Tab B